Australian Bureau of Statistics

6291.0.55.001 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Jan 2018

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Summary

Main Features

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Explanatory Notes are relevant to both releases.

What's New In The Labour Force

WHAT'S NEW IN THE LABOUR FORCE

UPCOMING CHANGES

For the March 2018 release of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) to be released on the 19th of April, the following changes will be implemented:

ANNUAL SEASONAL REANALYSIS

Every year, the ABS conducts an "Annual Seasonal Re-analysis" of the Labour Force time series, on estimates up to March. Minor adjustments are made as a result of this annual review process (for more information see Explanatory Note 33). The outcomes of the 2018 review will be incorporated in the estimates published in the March 2018 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), which will be released on 19 April 2018.

While seasonal factors for the complete time series are estimated every month, they are reviewed annually at a more detailed level than is possible on a monthly basis, to

ensure that time series estimates are of the highest quality. As with previous reviews, the ABS expects revisions to seasonally adjusted and trend estimates arising from the annual seasonal reanalysis to be minimal.

IMPROVEMENTS TO TREND ESTIMATION

As part of the 2018 Annual Seasonal Reanalysis, the ABS will implement some minor improvements to trend estimation for Labour Force time series. These improvements will reduce the extent of revisions in trend series over time, providing particular benefits for series with smaller populations (eg. states and territories with smaller populations).

The ABS will publish a short article in the next release of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), further outlining the improved approach and including indicative impacts of the change to trend estimates.

The methods used to calculate seasonally adjusted estimates will not be changed.

MONTHLY UNDEREMPLOYMENT ESTIMATES - TREND AND SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

To coincide with the Annual Seasonal Reanalysis, the ABS will be expanding the range of underemployment and underutilisation measures. Currently, the ABS publishes a combination of quarterly trend, seasonally adjusted and original estimates back to February 1978, and monthly original estimates back to July 2014.

Starting with the March 2018 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), the ABS will publish monthly trend, seasonally adjusted and original estimates back to February 1978.

Further information on the new monthly series will be released in the next issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). This information will include changes that will be made to the suite of time series spreadsheets.

500TH ISSUE OF 6202.0

The release of January 2018 Labour Force estimates marks the 500th issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). To mark this milestone, the ABS has released a PDF containing images of the front page of all 500 issues in an article entitled 500th issue of 6202.0.

Insights from the Original Data

INSIGHTS FROM THE ORIGINAL DATA

SAMPLE COMPOSITION

The Labour Force Survey sample can be thought of as comprising eight sub-samples (or

rotation groups), with each sub-sample remaining in the survey for eight months, and one rotation group "rotating out" each month and being replaced by a new group " rotating in". This sample rotation is important in ensuring that seven-eighths of the sample are common from one month to the next, to ensure that changes in the estimates reflect real changes in the labour market, rather than the sample. In addition, the replacement sample is generally selected from the same geographic areas as the outgoing one, as part of a representative sampling approach.

When considering movements in the original estimates, it is possible to decompose the sample into three components:

- the matched common sample (survey respondents who responded in both December and January);
- the unmatched common sample (survey respondents who responded in January but who did not respond in December, or vice versa); and
- the incoming rotation group (survey respondents who replaced respondents who rotated out in December).

The detailed decomposition of each of these movements is included in the data cube 'Insights From the Original Data'.

In considering the three components of the sample, it is important to remember that the matched common sample describes the change observed for the same respondents in December and January, while the other two components reflect differences between the aggregate labour force status of different groups of people.

While the rotation groups are designed to be representative of the population, the outgoing and incoming rotation groups will almost always have somewhat different characteristics, as a result of the groups representing a sample of different households and people. The design of the survey, including the weighting and estimation processes, ensures that these differences are generally relatively minor and seeks to ensure that differences in characteristics of rotation groups do not affect the representativeness of the survey and its estimates. Monthly estimates are always designed to be representative of their respective months, regardless of the relative contribution of the three components of the sample.

INCOMING ROTATION GROUP

In original terms, the incoming rotation group in January 2018 had a lower employment to population ratio than the group it replaced (60.7 per cent in December, down to 58.3 per cent in January 2018), and was lower than the ratio for the entire sample (61.2 per cent).

The full-time employment to population ratio of the incoming rotation group was lower than the group it replaced (41.9 per cent in December 2017 and down to 39.1 per cent in January 2018), and lower than the ratio for the entire sample (42.0 per cent).

The unemployment rate of the incoming rotation group was 1.0 percentage point higher than the whole sample (6.9 per cent, compared to 6.0 per cent), and it replaced a group with a lower rate (5.0 per cent in December). Its participation rate was below that of the sample as a whole (62.6 per cent, compared to 65.1 per cent), and also below the group it replaced (63.9 per cent in December).

OUTGOING ROTATION GROUP

In looking ahead to the February 2018 estimates, the outgoing rotation group in January 2018, which will be replaced by a new incoming rotation group in February 2018, has a higher employment to population ratio (61.3 per cent in January 2018) compared to the sample as a whole (61.2 per cent). The full-time employment to population ratio (42.1 per cent) is higher than the ratio for the entire sample (42.0 per cent).

In original terms, the unemployment rate for the outgoing rotation group in January 2018 is lower than the sample as a whole (5.5 per cent, compared to 6.0 per cent). The participation rate for the outgoing rotation group in January 2018 is 64.9 per cent, which is lower than the rate for the whole sample (65.1 per cent).

THE IMPORTANCE OF TREND DATA

As the gross flows and rotation group data are presented in original terms they are not directly comparable to the seasonally adjusted and trend data discussed elsewhere in the commentary, and are included to provide additional information for the original data. Since the original data are unadjusted, they have a considerable level of inherent sampling variability, which is specifically adjusted for in the trend series. The trend data provide the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market and are the focus of the commentary in this publication.

Advice on Reporting Regional Labour Force Data

ADVICE ON REPORTING REGIONAL LABOUR FORCE DATA

The ABS recommends considering the following advice when interpreting and reporting regional labour force data:

> To account for sampling variability, especially in regions with smaller populations, the ABS recommends that analysis of regional labour force estimates should be based on annual averages (as presented in Table 16(b) of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)).

INTRODUCTION

The monthly Labour Force Survey provides timely information on the labour market activity of the usually resident civilian population of Australia aged 15 years and over. The statistics of most interest each month are the national and state and territory estimates of the number of employed and unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the labour force participation rate. The rate of change in the number of people employed is a key indicator of economic growth, and the unemployment rate is a key measure of unutilised labour. The participation rate reflects the percentage of the population in the labour force. The underemployment rate is an additional measure of increasing importance, of the extent of underutilisation of employed people.

The Labour Force Survey is designed primarily to provide accurate national estimates, with the secondary design objective of producing state and territory estimates. While the Labour

Force Survey is not designed to produce regional estimates, these are compiled from smaller sample sizes at a lower level of statistical quality compared to those produced at state and territory and national levels.

Regional labour force data are published according to the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) at the Greater Capital City Statistical Area (GCCSA) and the Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) on a monthly basis in Labour Force, Australia, Detailed (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001). Each SA4 is designed to reflect, as best as possible, a discrete labour market within a state or territory, subject to the population limits imposed by the size of the Labour Force Survey sample.

It is also important to note that estimates are based on the place of usual residence, while respondents may be employed in a different region to where they live. This is particularly relevant for regions around capital cities, with workers often travelling across regional boundaries to central business districts, and labour market outcomes are more likely to reflect activity in these areas.

On a monthly basis, the Labour Force Survey samples approximately 26,000 dwellings which represents 0.32% of the Australian population. The sample is stratified across the regions of Australia to ensure a representative sample of survey participants and to minimise bias toward any one group of people. As a result, regions with lower populations tend to have fewer people sampled. Estimates produced from small samples are generally subject to proportionally higher sampling error, compared with estimates produced using larger samples. Data at SA4 level are also only presented in original terms, as it is difficult to estimate reliable seasonal factors at this level of detail.

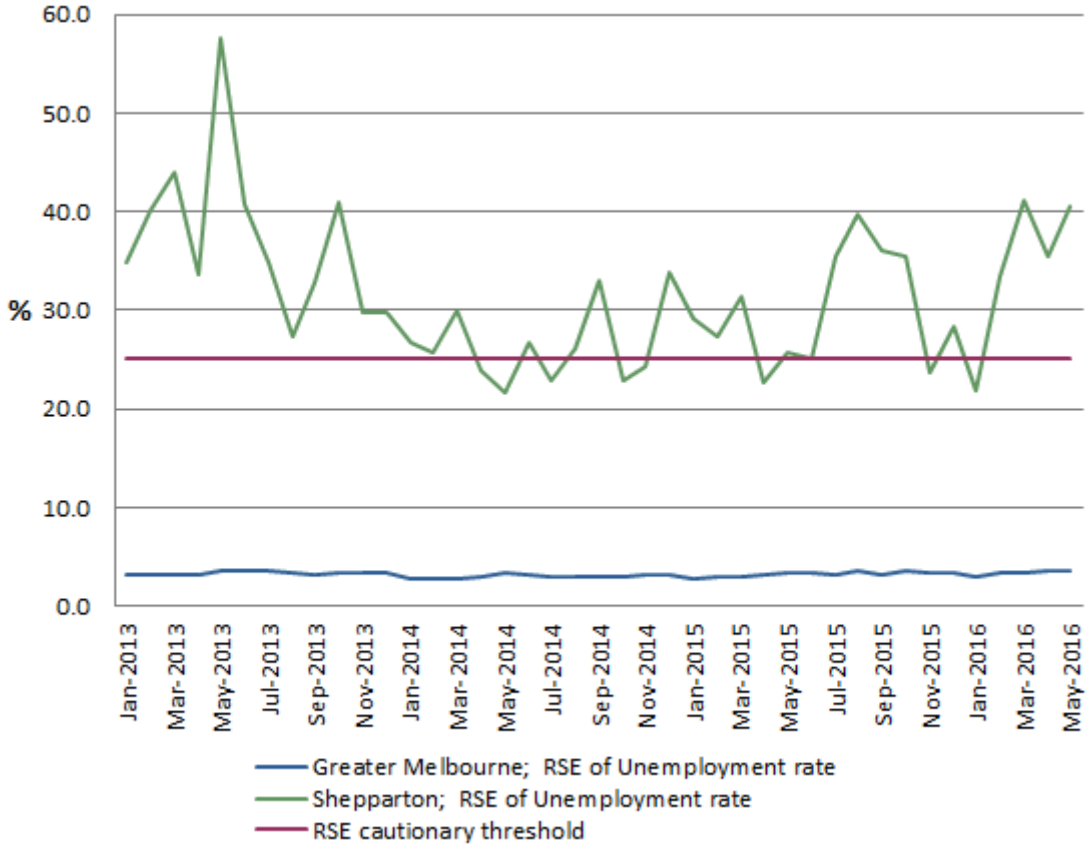
Over time, large data fluctuations occur across most of the regional labour force data with relatively low populations. These fluctuations can be partly the result of local events (for example, the 2011 Queensland floods affected the collection of the labour force data for January 2011), but are generally due to sampling variability rather than changes in underlying market conditions.

SAMPLE SIZE AND RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS

The Relative Standard Error (RSE) of an estimate is the inherent error of the sample as a fraction of the size of the estimate, and provides an indication of the percentage error likely to have occurred due the estimate being produced from a survey sample rather than the total population. The ABS publishes the RSE of each estimate produced from the Labour Force Survey to provide context to the estimates (see Labour Force Survey Standard Errors Data Cube (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001)). In published labour force data, any estimate with an RSE greater than 25% is marked with an asterisk to indicate that its value is subject to high sampling error and should be used with caution.

Graph 1 below provides a comparison between the unemployment rates for the time period January 2013 to May 2016 for Greater Melbourne and Shepparton. Graph 1 shows that the unemployment rate for Shepparton between January 2013 and May 2016 has almost all of its RSEs greater than 25%, while the RSE values for Greater Melbourne, which are based on a larger sample, are consistently lower at around 3%. Data for larger population areas, such as those separated into State, Greater Capital City or Rest of State and Territories, are likely to be affected by smaller sampling error, making point in time comparisons between these larger regions of higher quality.

GRAPH 1. RSE of Monthly Unemployment Rate, Greater Melbourne and Shepparton



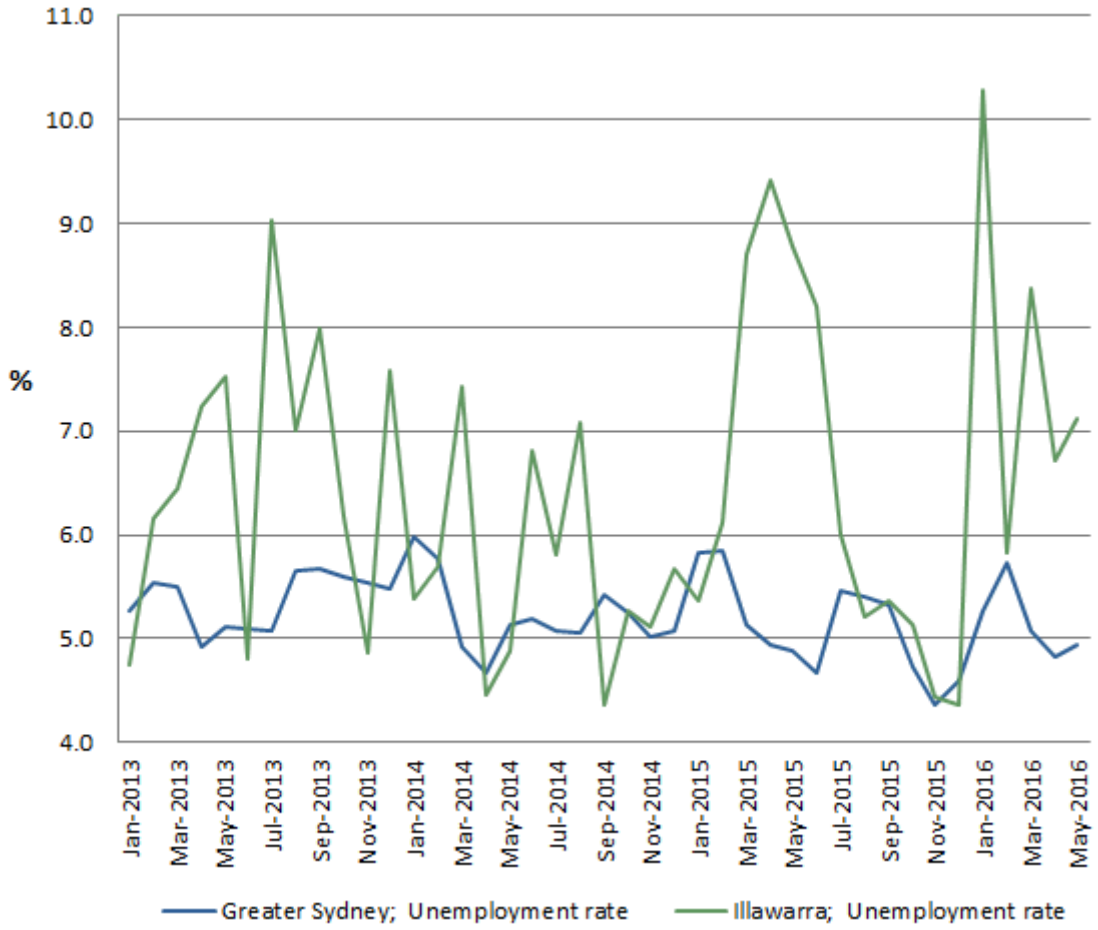
INTERPRETING MOVEMENTS IN ORIGINAL DATA

All original labour force time series data (including labour market regions) consists of seasonal influences, irregular fluctuations and an underlying trend. An original data series with large irregular fluctuations can mask important underlying trends in the data. Data associated with regions of smaller population are more likely to exhibit large short-term fluctuations due to sampling error, and further statistical analysis of the data may be required before accurate conclusions can be formed.

Data at SA4 level are presented in original terms only, as seasonal factors are unstable at this level of detail. This can result in point in time inter-regional comparisons, using only the original data, being subject to influences from sampling error, seasonal influences and irregular components of the time series.

As an example, consider Graph 2 below which shows the unemployment rates of Greater Sydney and Illawarra over the period January 2013 to May 2016. Between December 2015 and January 2016, the unemployment rate for Greater Sydney rose from 4.6% to 5.3% and for Illawarra from 4.4% to 10.3%. This could possibly be a result of both regions experiencing higher unemployment rates, or an indication of an economic downturn. However, historical evidence shows that, in general, unemployment rates are seasonally lower in December than they are in January. Graph 2 shows that the Illawarra unemployment rate series was affected to a greater extent by irregular fluctuations than the same series for Greater Sydney. Patterns in historical data show that the unemployment rate for Illawarra fluctuates to a much larger extent in comparison to Greater Sydney, so this large increase in the Illawarra unemployment rate could be the result of an irregular, short term upward fluctuation.

GRAPH 2. Original Series, Unemployment Rates of Greater Sydney and Illawarra



SMOOTHING OUT SHORT TERM FLUCTUATIONS IN REGIONAL DATA

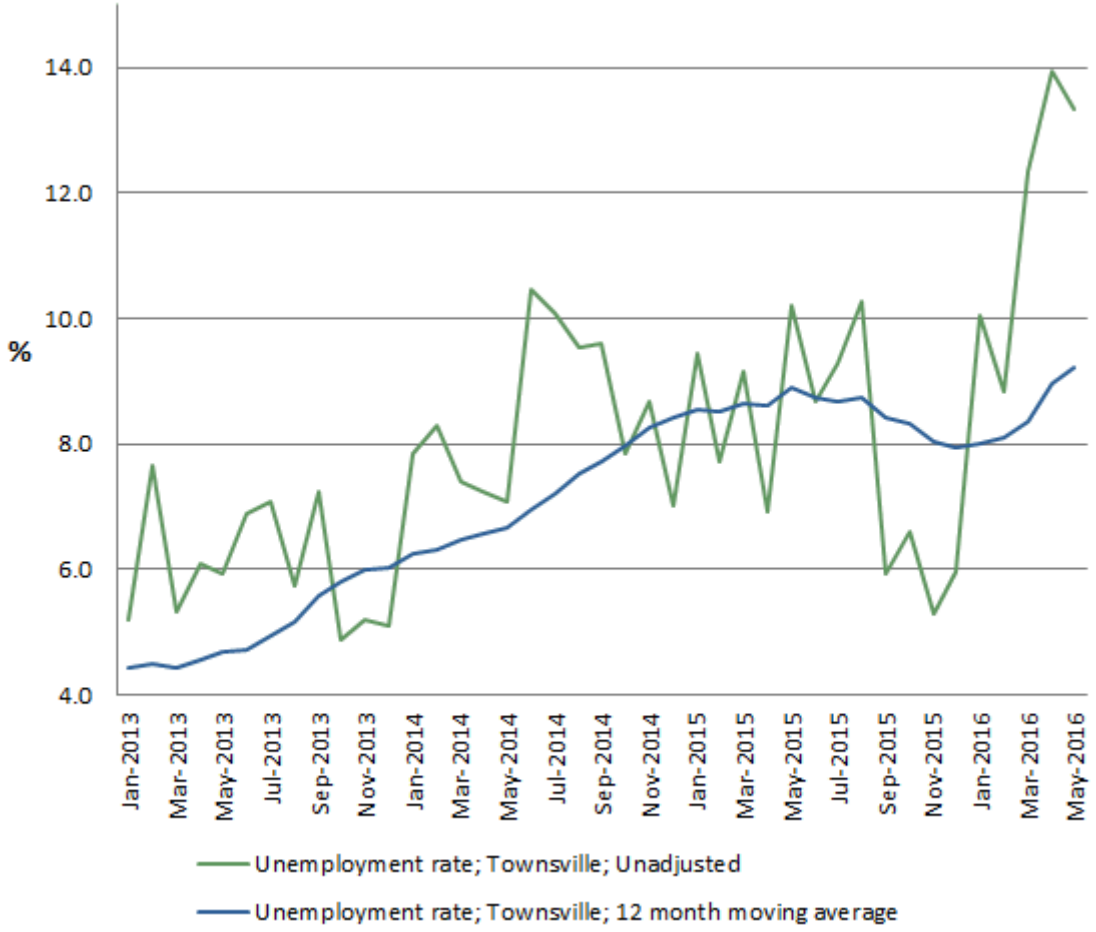
As described above, regional labour force data are more susceptible to irregular fluctuations in the original data and higher RSEs. However, the regional labour force data can be used to give an indication of longer term trends and analysis of regional LFS data should be undertaken on this basis. There are some simple methods that can be used to reduce the amount of variation, though these generally have some unavoidable disadvantages. The advantages and disadvantages of alternative methods are discussed in detail in A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends (cat. no. 1349.0).

A 12 month moving average is an intuitively simple method, which may lead to an improved interpretation (when compared with an unadjusted series) of the underlying trend movement as shown in Graph 3 and Graph 4 below. These show the difference in the unemployment rate time series from January 2013 to May 2016 for Greater Brisbane and Townsville, plotted using an unadjusted series and a 12 month moving average.

By applying an annual average to the original regional estimates, any seasonal influences are lessened and the monthly variation due to irregular fluctuations may also be reduced. However, the sampling error associated with regional estimates must still be considered before drawing any conclusions from the estimates, and the application of a 12 month moving average is unlikely to accurately or quickly detect turning points in the time series.

GRAPH 3. Unemployment Rates of Greater Brisbane; unadjusted and 12 month moving average

GRAPH 4. Unemployment Rates of Townsville; unadjusted and 12 month moving average



Starting with the July 2016 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), the ABS will include a 12 month moving average spreadsheet (Table 16b). The original data for regional statistics will continue to be available in Table 16, to allow users to construct other moving averages, such as 3 month or 6 month averages, for regions with larger populations or for aggregations of multiple regions.

It is important to note that there are alternative and somewhat more complex methods for smoothing original regional series, such as comparing year-apart growth, and applying a 13-term symmetrical weighted moving average. However, a 12 month moving average is sufficient for most purposes.

SUMMARY

In interpreting labour force regional time series data, it is important to consider both the strengths and the limitations of these types of data, including the relative standard error, before drawing conclusions based on the estimates. The regional estimates have, by design, unavoidably larger relative sampling error compared to the national and state and territory estimates, owing to their smaller sample sizes. Original data also contain seasonal influences and irregular fluctuations, which can mask the underlying trend of the data.

It is for these reasons that the ABS recommends that analysis of regional labour force estimates should be based on annual averages (as presented in Table 16(b) of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The ABS wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the Queensland Treasury and their valuable contribution toward the content of this article.

FOOTNOTE: DEFINITION OF SAMPLING ERROR

Sampling error refers to the difference between an estimate for a population based on data from a sample and the 'true' value for that population, which would result if the whole population were enumerated. Sampling error is affected by a number of factors including sample size, sample design, the sampling fraction and the variability within the population.

FOOTNOTE: COMPARING REGIONAL DATA BEFORE AND AFTER 2013

Labour Force estimates have been published using ASGS regions since January 2014, and were backcast to October 1998. Estimates were backcast by determining from which SA4 each responding dwelling would have been sampled, had the ASGS been the geographical standard used for past Labour Force Survey sample designs. Backcasting labour force estimates by SA4s enabled a consistent time series of regional estimates to be published. However, because previous Labour Force Survey samples were designed using the previous geography standard rather than the ASGS, the creation of a consistent regional times series has had a slight impact on the quality of historical labour force estimates.

Article Archive

This section provides an archive of articles and analysis published in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), promoting the effective use of labour force statistics. Articles are sorted by publication month.

Articles on labour related topics are also available in Australian Labour Market Statistics (cat. no. 6105.0) and Australian Social Trends (cat. no. 4102.0).

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Understanding Labour Force (cat. no. 6202.0, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)

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Exploring Labour Force Data on joblessness (cat. no. 6202.0)
Understanding Labour Force (cat. no. 6202.0, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)

January
Employment level estimates versus employment to population explained (cat. no. 6202.0)

2011

November
Understanding Labour Force (cat. no. 6202.0, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001, cat. no. 6291.0.55.003)
Aggregate monthly hours worked,Trend estimates (cat. no. 6202.0)
Underemployment rate,Trend estimates (cat. no. 6202.0)
Labour force underutilisation rate,Trend estimates (cat. no. 6202.0)

February
Historical Revisions (cat. no. 6202.0, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001, cat. no. 6291.0.55.003)

January
Impact of the floods on the Labour Force Survey (cat. no. 6202.0, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001)
Employed Persons,Trend estimates (cat. no. 6202.0)
Unemployed Persons,Trend estimates (cat. no. 6202.0)

About this Release

A range of Labour Force related Excel spreadsheets and Excel pivot tables. The monthly spreadsheets contain broad level data covering all the major items of the Labour Force Survey in time series format, including seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. The monthly pivot tables contain more detailed and cross classified original data than the spreadsheets.

Explanatory Notes

Explanatory Notes

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Explanatory Notes are relevant to both releases.

Standard Errors

Estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) are based on information collected from people in a sample of dwellings, rather than the entire population. Hence the estimates produced may differ from those that would have been produced if the entire population had been included in the survey. The most common measure of the likely difference (or 'sampling error') is the standard error (SE).

The ABS considers that estimates with a relative standard error of 25% or more may be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

To indicate those cells in spreadsheets with a relative standard error of 25% or more, annotations have been applied prior to dissemination.

In addition, the tables below have been supplied to show estimates at which the relative standard error is 25%. Estimates of the size indicated in the tables, or smaller, are considered to be subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes.

Due to the January 2011 flooding in Queensland the relative standard errors for January 2011 will be higher than normal in some regions, therefore for Queensland the estimates at which the relative standard error is 25% will be higher than they appear in the tables below. However from February, the data returns to normal.

The new labour force sample was phased-in over four months from May to August 2013. During phase in of the new sample, standard errors associated with key labour force data were expected to increase by approximately 10% at a national level, however increased standard errors and variability in the estimates may be more evident in detailed regional data during this time.

The RSEs for July 2013 (50% old sample, 50% new sample) and onwards will be subject to revisions in the future, as more information is known about the new sample after it has been introduced.

Additional information on how standard errors for LFS estimates are produced is available in Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001).

State	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Aust
Employed									
Feb-78 — Sep-82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.8	2.0	4.5
Oct-82 — Aug-87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep-87 — Feb-89	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Mar-89 — Aug-92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.1	2.3	1.3	2.0	1.4	3.5
Sep-92 — Aug-97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep-97 — Sep-98	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Oct-98 — Feb-03	5.9	3.1	3.7	2.5	2.2	1.1	1.3	0.9	5.5
Mar-03 — Oct-07	6.3	3.0	4.4	2.3	2.5	1.3	1.5	1.1	6.6
Nov-07	6.2	3.2	4.3	2.3	2.5	1.3	1.4	1.1	6.4
Dec-07	6.1	3.4	4.3	2.3	2.6	1.3	1.3	1.1	6.2
Jan-08	6.0	3.6	4.2	2.3	2.6	1.3	1.3	1.2	6.0
Feb-08	5.9	3.8	4.2	2.4	2.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	5.9
Mar-08	5.9	4.1	4.2	2.4	3.0	1.2	1.1	1.2	5.7
Apr-08	5.8	4.4	4.4	2.5	3.1	1.3	1.0	1.3	5.6
May-08	5.7	4.7	4.3	2.5	3.1	1.3	1.0	1.3	5.4
Jun-08	5.5	4.9	4.3	2.5	3.3	1.3	1.0	1.3	5.3
Jul-08 — Aug-09	6.9	6.1	5.3	3.1	4.0	1.5	1.2	1.6	7.4
Sep-09	6.5	5.8	5.0	2.9	3.8	1.5	1.1	1.5	7.0
Oct-09	6.1	5.5	4.7	2.8	3.6	1.4	1.0	1.4	6.5
Nov-09	5.8	5.2	4.5	2.6	3.4	1.3	1.0	1.4	6.2
Dec-09 — Jun-13	5.5	4.9	4.3	2.5	3.3	1.3	1.0	1.3	5.8
Jul-13 — Jan-14	7.7	3.8	5.5	2.7	3.8	1.4	0.3	1.7	7.8
Feb-14 onwards	7.9	3.9	5.6	2.7	3.8	1.4	0.3	1.7	7.9
Unemployed									
Feb-78 — Sep-82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.8	2.0	4.5
Oct-82 — Aug-87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep-87 — Feb-89	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Mar-89 — Aug-92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.1	2.3	1.3	2.0	1.4	3.5
Sep-92 — Aug-97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep-97 — Sep-98	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Oct-98 — Feb-03	5.7	5.7	4.5	2.6	3.3	1.3	3.2	1.4	4.9
Mar-03 — Oct-07	6.0	5.4	4.9	2.9	3.6	1.6	2.2	1.6	5.2
Nov-07	6.1	5.4	5.0	2.9	3.7	1.6	2.1	1.7	5.2
Dec-07	6.2	5.5	5.0	2.9	3.8	1.7	1.9	1.7	5.2
Jan-08	6.3	5.6	5.0	3.0	4.0	1.7	1.8	1.8	5.2
Feb-08	6.4	5.7	5.1	3.0	4.1	1.7	1.7	1.8	5.1
Mar-08	6.7	5.7	5.2	3.1	4.5	1.8	1.6	1.9	5.1
Apr-08	6.8	5.9	5.5	3.2	4.6	1.9	1.5	1.9	5.2
May-08	6.9	6.0	5.5	3.3	4.8	1.9	1.4	2.0	5.1
Jun-08	7.1	6.1	5.6	3.3	5.0	1.9	1.4	2.1	5.1

Jul-08 — Aug-09	9.3	8.0	7.4	4.4	6.6	2.5	1.8	2.8	7.3
Sep-09	8.7	7.5	6.8	4.1	6.1	2.4	1.6	2.5	6.8
Oct-09	8.1	7.0	6.4	3.8	5.7	2.2	1.5	2.4	6.4
Nov-09	7.5	6.5	6.0	3.5	5.3	2.1	1.5	2.2	6.0
Dec-09 — Jun-13	7.1	6.1	5.6	3.3	5.0	1.9	1.4	2.1	5.7
Jul-13 — Jan-14	7.3	6.6	8.4	3.7	5.8	1.7	1.3	2.2	7.1
Feb-14 onwards	7.4	6.7	8.6	3.8	5.9	1.8	1.3	2.3	7.3
NILF									
Feb-78 — Sep-82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.8	2.0	4.5
Oct-82 — Aug-87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep-87 — Feb-89	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Mar-89 — Aug-92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.1	2.3	1.3	2.0	1.4	3.5
Sep-92 — Aug-97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep-97 — Sep-98	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Oct-98 — Feb-03	6.4	3.7	4.1	3.2	2.7	1.2	1.4	1.1	6.0
Mar-03 — Oct-07	7.8	3.7	5.2	3.0	3.2	1.5	2.0	1.3	7.3
Nov-07	7.6	3.9	5.1	3.0	3.2	1.5	1.8	1.3	7.0
Dec-07	7.4	4.1	5.1	3.0	3.3	1.5	1.7	1.4	6.8
Jan-08	7.3	4.4	5.0	3.0	3.4	1.5	1.6	1.4	6.6
Feb-08	7.1	4.7	5.0	3.1	3.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	6.3
Mar-08	7.1	5.0	4.9	3.1	3.8	1.5	1.3	1.5	6.2
Apr-08	7.0	5.4	5.3	3.2	3.9	1.5	1.2	1.5	6.0
May-08	6.8	5.7	5.2	3.2	4.0	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.8
Jun-08	6.6	6.0	5.2	3.2	4.1	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.6
Jul-08 — Aug-09	8.3	7.6	6.5	4.0	5.2	1.8	1.4	2.0	8.0
Sep-09	7.8	7.2	6.1	3.7	4.9	1.7	1.3	1.9	7.4
Oct-09	7.3	6.7	5.8	3.5	4.6	1.6	1.2	1.8	6.9
Nov-09	6.9	6.4	5.4	3.3	4.4	1.6	1.2	1.7	6.5
Dec-09 — Jun-13	6.6	6.0	5.2	3.2	4.1	1.5	1.1	1.6	6.2
Jul-13 — Jan-14	8.4	4.4	9.8	3.6	4.5	1.8	0.7	2.5	9.0
Feb-14 onwards	8.5	4.5	9.9	3.7	4.6	1.8	0.8	2.5	9.1

Greater Capital City Statistical Areas	**Feb-78 — Sep-82**	**Oct-82 — Aug-87**	**Sep-87 — Feb-89**	**Mar-89 — Aug-92**	**Sep-92 — Aug-97**	**Sep-97 — Sep-98**	**Oct-98 — Feb-03**
Greater Sydney	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	5.3	5.7	5.8
Rest of NSW	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	5.3	5.7	5.8
Greater Melbourne	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.6	3.3
Rest of Victoria	4.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.2
Greater Brisbane	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.7	3.4
Rest of Queensland	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.6	4.3	3.6
Greater Adelaide	2.5	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.7
Rest of South Australia	2.5	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.5
Greater Perth	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.9	2.6	2.3
Rest of Western Australia	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.9	2.8	2.2
Greater Hobart	1.5	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	0.9
Rest of Tasmania	1.5	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.1

	Mar-03 — Feb-08	**Mar-08 — Jun-08**	**Jul-08 — Oct-09**	**Nov-09 — Jun-13**	**Jul-13 — Jan-14**	**Feb -14 onwards**
Greater Sydney	6.5	5.7	7.1	5.7	7.6	7.7
Rest of NSW	6.4	5.6	7.0	5.6	7.5	7.6
Greater Melbourne	3.2	5.1	6.4	5.1	4.0	4.0
Rest of Victoria	3.1	5.0	6.3	5.0	3.9	3.9
Greater Brisbane	4.1	4.0	5.0	4.0	5.9	6.0
Rest of Queensland	4.4	4.3	5.4	4.3	6.3	6.4
Greater Adelaide	2.5	2.7	3.4	2.7	3.0	3.0
Rest of South Australia	2.4	2.5	3.1	2.5	2.8	2.8
Greater Perth	2.6	3.5	4.3	3.5	3.9	4.0
Rest of Western Australia	2.5	3.3	4.1	3.3	3.7	3.8
Greater Hobart	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.3
Rest of Tasmania	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.5

Statistical Area Level 4 Regions	**Oct-98 — Feb-03**	**Mar-03 — Feb-08**	**Mar-08 — Jun-08**	**Jul-08 — Oct-09**	**Nov-09 — Jun-13**	**Jul-13 — Jan-14**	**Feb-14 onwards**
Central Coast	7.4	8.5	7.2	9.4	7.2	10.2	10.4

Sydney - Baulkham Hills and Hawkesbury	7.2	8.3	7.0	9.2	7.0	10.0	10.2
Sydney - Blacktown	7.3	8.3	7.1	9.3	7.1	10.0	10.2
Sydney - City and Inner South	8.5	9.7	8.3	10.8	8.3	11.7	11.9
Sydney - Eastern Suburbs	9.6	11.0	9.3	12.2	9.3	13.1	13.4
Sydney - Inner South West	7.3	8.4	7.1	9.3	7.1	10.1	10.3
Sydney - Inner West	7.7	8.8	7.5	9.8	7.5	10.6	10.8
Sydney - North Sydney and Hornsby	7.6	8.6	7.3	9.6	7.3	10.4	10.6
Sydney - Northern Beaches	7.8	8.9	7.6	9.9	7.6	10.7	10.9
Sydney - Outer South West	7.3	8.4	7.1	9.3	7.1	10.1	10.3
Sydney - Outer West and Blue Mountains	7.3	8.3	7.1	9.3	7.1	10.0	10.2
Sydney - Parramatta	7.8	8.9	7.6	10.0	7.6	10.8	11.0
Sydney - Ryde	7.7	8.8	7.5	9.8	7.5	10.6	10.8
Sydney - South West	7.5	8.6	7.3	9.6	7.3	10.4	10.6
Sydney - Sutherland	7.4	8.4	7.2	9.4	7.2	10.1	10.3
Capital Region	7.2	8.2	7.0	9.2	7.0	9.9	10.1
Central West	7.6	8.7	7.4	9.7	7.4	10.5	10.7
Coffs Harbour - Grafton	7.6	8.7	7.4	9.7	7.4	10.5	10.7
Far West and Orana	7.4	8.4	7.2	9.4	7.2	10.1	10.3
Hunter Valley exc Newcastle	7.1	8.1	6.9	9.0	6.9	9.8	10.0
Illawarra	7.6	8.7	7.4	9.7	7.4	10.5	10.7
Mid North Coast	7.5	8.6	7.3	9.6	7.3	10.3	10.6
Murray	7.6	8.6	7.4	9.6	7.4	10.4	10.6
New England and North West	7.6	8.7	7.4	9.7	7.4	10.5	10.7
Newcastle and Lake Macquarie	7.1	8.1	6.9	9.0	6.9	9.8	9.9
Richmond - Tweed	7.6	8.7	7.4	9.7	7.4	10.5	10.7
Riverina	7.6	8.6	7.4	9.6	7.4	10.4	10.6
Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven	9.0	10.3	8.7	11.4	8.7	12.3	12.6
Melbourne - Inner	4.1	3.9	7.2	9.4	7.2	5.2	5.3
Melbourne - Inner East	3.6	3.4	6.2	8.2	6.2	4.5	4.6
Melbourne - Inner South	3.7	3.5	6.4	8.4	6.4	4.7	4.8
Melbourne - North East	3.8	3.6	6.6	8.6	6.6	4.8	4.9
Melbourne - North West	3.7	3.6	6.5	8.6	6.5	4.7	4.8
Melbourne - Outer East	3.8	3.6	6.6	8.7	6.6	4.8	4.9
Melbourne - South East	3.6	3.4	6.3	8.3	6.3	4.6	4.7
Melbourne - West	3.5	3.4	6.1	8.1	6.1	4.4	4.5
Mornington Peninsula	3.6	3.5	6.4	8.3	6.4	4.6	4.7
Ballarat	4.0	3.8	6.9	9.1	6.9	5.0	5.1
Bendigo	3.8	3.7	6.7	8.8	6.7	4.9	5.0
Geelong	3.7	3.5	6.5	8.5	6.5	4.7	4.8
Hume	4.3	4.1	7.4	9.7	7.4	5.4	5.5
Latrobe - Gippsland	4.1	3.9	7.2	9.4	7.2	5.2	5.3
North West	3.9	3.7	6.8	8.9	6.8	4.9	5.0
Shepparton	4.3	4.1	7.4	9.7	7.4	5.4	5.5
Warrnambool and South West	3.7	3.5	6.5	8.5	6.5	4.7	4.8
Brisbane - East	4.1	5.1	5.1	6.7	5.1	8.1	8.2
Brisbane - North	4.1	5.2	5.1	6.7	5.1	8.1	8.3
Brisbane - South	4.2	5.2	5.2	6.8	5.2	8.2	8.4
Brisbane - West	4.1	5.2	5.1	6.7	5.1	8.2	8.3
Brisbane Inner City	4.2	5.3	5.3	6.9	5.3	8.4	8.6
Ipswich	4.0	5.0	5.0	6.5	5.0	7.9	8.1
Logan - Beaudesert	4.3	5.4	5.3	7.0	5.3	8.4	8.6
Moreton Bay - North	3.9	4.9	4.8	6.4	4.8	7.7	7.9
Moreton Bay - South	3.9	4.9	4.8	6.3	4.8	7.7	7.9
Cairns	4.9	6.2	6.1	8.0	6.1	9.7	9.9
Darling Downs - Maranoa	4.6	5.8	5.7	7.5	5.7	9.1	9.3
Fitzroy	4.2	5.3	5.2	6.9	5.2	8.3	8.5
Gold Coast	4.3	5.5	5.4	7.1	5.4	8.6	8.7
Mackay	4.2	5.3	5.2	6.9	5.2	8.3	8.5
Queensland - Outback	4.7	5.9	5.8	7.6	5.8	9.2	9.4
Sunshine Coast	4.3	5.4	5.3	7.0	5.3	8.5	8.7
Toowoomba	4.6	5.8	5.7	7.5	5.7	9.0	9.2
Townsville	4.7	5.9	5.8	7.6	5.8	9.2	9.4

Wide Bay	4.6	5.8	5.7	7.5	5.7	9.0	9.2
Adelaide - Central and Hills	3.3	3.1	3.3	4.3	3.3	3.7	3.8
Adelaide - North	3.3	3.0	3.3	4.3	3.3	3.7	3.8
Adelaide - South	3.4	3.1	3.4	4.4	3.4	3.8	3.9
Adelaide - West	3.7	3.4	3.7	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.2
Barossa - Yorke - Mid North	3.5	3.2	3.5	4.5	3.5	3.9	4.0
South Australia - Outback	3.7	3.4	3.7	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.2
South Australia - South East	3.1	2.8	3.1	4.0	3.1	3.5	3.5
Mandurah	2.4	2.8	4.0	5.2	4.0	4.6	4.7
Perth - Inner	3.1	3.5	4.9	6.5	4.9	5.8	5.9
Perth - North East	2.9	3.3	4.6	6.1	4.6	5.4	5.5
Perth - North West	2.8	3.2	4.5	5.9	4.5	5.2	5.3
Perth - South East	2.9	3.3	4.7	6.1	4.7	5.5	5.6
Perth - South West	2.7	3.1	4.3	5.7	4.3	5.0	5.1
Bunbury	2.4	2.8	4.0	5.2	4.0	4.6	4.7
Western Australia - Outback	2.8	3.3	4.6	6.0	4.6	5.4	5.5
Western Australia - Wheat Belt	2.6	3.0	4.2	5.5	4.2	4.9	5.0
Greater Hobart	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.3
Launceston and North East	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.7	1.8
Tasmania - South East	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.4	1.9	2.2	2.2
Tasmania - West and North West	1.3	1.6	1.6	2.0	1.6	1.8	1.8
Darwin	1.4	1.7	1.0	1.3	1.0	0.9	0.9
Northern Territory - Outback	1.4	1.7	1.0	1.3	1.0	0.9	0.9

Quality Declaration - Summary

QUALITY DECLARATION - SUMMARY

INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Labour Force statistics are compiled from the Labour Force Survey which is conducted each month throughout Australia as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) household survey program. For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

RELEVANCE

The Labour Force Survey provides monthly information about the labour market activity of Australia's resident civilian population aged 15 years and over. The Labour Force Survey is designed to primarily provide estimates of employment and unemployment for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

TIMELINESS

The Labour Force Survey enumeration begins on the Sunday between the 5th and 11th of the month, except for the Christmas and New Year holiday period. In December enumerations starts between the 3rd and 9th (4 weeks after November enumeration begins). In January enumeration starts between the 7th and 13th (5 weeks after December enumeration begins).

Key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are published in two stages. The first, Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), is released 39 days after the commencement of enumeration for the month, with the exception of estimates for December which are published 46 days after the commencement of enumeration.

The second stage includes detailed data that were not part of the first stage and are published in Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003). The second stage is released 7 days after the first stage.

ACCURACY

The Labour Force Survey is based on a sample of private dwellings (approximately 26,000 houses, flats etc) and non-private dwellings, such as hotels and motels. The sample covers about 0.32% of the Australian civilian population aged 15 years or over. The Labour Force Survey is designed primarily to provide estimates of key labour force statistics for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: non-sampling error and sampling error.

Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. Every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing procedures. Non-sampling error also arises because information cannot be obtained from all persons selected in the survey. The Australian Labour Force Survey receives a higher level of co-operation from individuals in selected dwellings compared to other countries, with the average response rate over the past 3 years being 93.25 per cent, and the average rate over the past year being 92.5 per cent (to the nearest quarter of a per cent, in rounded terms)**.** See Glossary for definition of response rate.

Sampling error occurs because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. One measure of the likely difference resulting from not including all dwellings in the survey is given by the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

Standard errors of key estimates and movements since the previous month are available in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0). The standard error of other estimates and movements may be calculated by using the spreadsheet contained in Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube (cat. no. 6298.0.55.001).

COHERENCE

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey each month since February 1978. While seeking to provide a high degree of consistency and comparability over time by minimising changes to the survey, sound survey practice requires careful and continuing maintenance and development to maintain the integrity of the data and the efficiency of the collection.

The changes which have been made to the Labour Force Survey have included changes in

sampling methods, estimation methods, concepts, data item definitions, classifications, and time series analysis techniques. In introducing these changes the ABS has generally revised previous estimates to ensure consistency and coherence with current estimates. For a full list of changes made to the Labour Force Survey see Chapter 20 in Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

INTERPRETABILITY

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey each month since February 1978. While seeking to provide a high degree of consistency and comparability over time by minimising changes to the survey, sound survey practice requires careful and continuing maintenance and development to maintain the integrity of the data and the efficiency of the collection.

The changes which have been made to the Labour Force Survey have included changes in sampling methods, estimation methods, concepts, data item definitions, classifications, and time series analysis techniques. In introducing these changes the ABS has generally revised previous estimates to ensure consistency and coherence with current estimates. For a full list of changes made to the Labour Force Survey see Chapter 20 in Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001).

ACCESSIBILITY

Please see the Related Information tab for the list of products that are available from this collection.